



## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

### Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge

#### Refuge Happenings

**December 2020:** *The Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge is presently located in twenty-two different locations in the four primary Connecticut River watershed states of Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont. The Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge is located in ten locations on the mainland and near shore islands along the northern shore of the Long Island Sound in Connecticut.*

#### Grassland Management



Photo Credit: USFWS

Management of trust resources and the habitat that they rely on is a priority at the Conte Refuge. Due to warmer than normal conditions this season, Refuge staff were able to mow a grassland unit that is maintained for grassland dependent species. In particular, the site is managed for northern harrier.

For more information contact: [Steve\\_Agius@fws.gov](mailto:Steve_Agius@fws.gov)

#### Trail Counter Installation At Pondicherry and Nulhegan Basin Divisions



Photo Credit: USFWS

Visitation trail counters were deployed at the Nulhegan Basin Division in Vermont and the Pondicherry Divisions in New Hampshire to better assess the level of use at Refuge trails. TRAFx electromagnetic and infrared trail counters are both being utilized to capture the amount of use by motorized and non-motorized visitors. To avoid vandalism, the trail counters were installed in 'bird houses' to camouflage their appearance.

For more information contact: [Steve\\_Agius@fws.gov](mailto:Steve_Agius@fws.gov)

#### Christmas Bird Count At The Nulhegan Basin Division



Refuge staff participated in the annual National Audubon Christmas Bird Count. The nationwide event included much of the Nulhegan Basin Division of the Conte Refuge. Unique species that were observed on the refuge included boreal chickadee and gray jay.

For more information contact: [Steve\\_Agius@fws.gov](mailto:Steve_Agius@fws.gov)

Photo Credit: John Predom



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#### Trailhead Kiosk Upgrades at The Blueberry Swamp and Nulhegan Basin Divisions



Photo Credit: USFWS

Conte Refuge staff are actively working to develop a uniform appearance at the refuge's many kiosks and trailheads. In 2020, kiosks at the Blueberry Swamp, Nulhegan Basin, Pondicherry and Putney Mountain properties were upgraded. The new interpretive panels include redesigned maps, images of local flora and fauna and information about the refuge. Additional kiosks throughout the watershed will be updated in 2021.

For more information contact: [Steve\\_Agius@fws.gov](mailto:Steve_Agius@fws.gov)

#### Creating Digital Content With Partners For Education



Photo Credit: USFWS

Conte Refuge Visitor Service staff spent time this month filming educational videos at the Springfield Science Museum that will be used on a digital platform to help educate visitors. The videos focus on different animal species that are on exhibit at the museum, native to New England, and can be found living in the Connecticut River Watershed. Once completed, the videos will be used in virtual field trips, as well as be available for public viewing on partnering websites.

For more information contact: [Jennifer\\_Lapis@fws.gov](mailto:Jennifer_Lapis@fws.gov)

#### Mud Pond Trail Expansion



The Mud Pond National Recreation Trail continues to grow in popularity. The fully accessible trail allows visitors to experience a 'poor fen' and various other habitat types. A discussion is underway to expand the one way trail into a loop trail. Recently, conservation partners met at the trail to discuss expansion options and maintenance of the trail.

For more information contact: [Steve\\_Agius@fws.gov](mailto:Steve_Agius@fws.gov)



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## McKinney Refuge Launches AGENTS OF DISCOVERY For Visitors!



McKinney Refuge recently launched the Agents Of Discovery Challenge, an educational game that allows visitors to explore their refuge in a whole new way. AGENTS is an App where people test their knowledge of wildlife and habitats interactively while walking the trails of the refuge's Salt Meadow Unit in Westbrook. Visitors can come to the refuge with their smart phones or tablets, open the App and look for "Discover McKinney National Wildlife Refuge Mission". The five challenges are appropriate for the entire family, and children are especially welcome to try their hand at this game.

For more information contact: [Shaun\\_Roche@fws.gov](mailto:Shaun_Roche@fws.gov)

Photo Credit: USFWS

## Conte Refuge Is Hiring Summer Interns



The MANO Project (My Access to a Network of Opportunities) provides internship and fellowship opportunities that offer unique, PAID work experiences that connect, build and develop thoughtful LATINO leaders. In partnership with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service the program will introduce students to various real-world public education, interpretation and communications, conservation and rehabilitation activities through work assignments, and informal and/or formal training provided by FWS employees. Participants will receive mentoring and ongoing support from HAF to effectively carry out their assignments and enhance skills such as culturally appropriate or bilingual community outreach.

### DIVERSE CAREER FIELDS

- Cultural and Heritage Preservation
- Natural and/or Cultural Resources
- Environmental Education/Conservation
- Engineering
- Communication/Media/Public Affairs
- Community Engagement

### BASIC ELIGIBILITY

- Local candidates strongly preferred; priority will be given to applicants currently living in the Northeast region (including MA, CT, RI, NY, NJ, PA, MD, VA and DC) or individuals with previous community ties in these regions.
- Current college students or graduates ages 18-30
- Possess U.S. citizenship or permanent residency
- And bring passion to your work!

### OPEN POSITIONS

ENVIRONMENTAL INTERPRETATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES INTERN - GREAT SWAMP NWR

SHARON-ROCKE, NJ

VISITOR SERVICES FELLOW - CONTE NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE REFUGE

WILKES-BARRE, PA

VISITOR SERVICES AND EDUCATION INTERN - PATRICKSON RESEARCH REFUGE

ALBANY, NY

ENVIRONMENTAL INTERPRETATION INTERN - MCKINNEY NWR

NEW HAVEN, CT

VISITOR & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INTERN - JOHN HEINZ NWR AT TINCUM

PHILADELPHIA, PA

"DEADLINE IS FEBRUARY 01"

MORE POSITIONS WILL BE POSTED SOON



Conte Refuge is partnering once again with the Hispanic Access Foundation to hire summer interns at both the Stewart B. McKinney Refuge and the Fort River Division in Hadley. Both internship positions will focus on Visitor Services and the Urban Refuge Program and Partnerships. To learn more about the positions and how to apply visit the Hispanic Access Foundation Website at <http://www.manoproject.org/>

For more information contact: [Jennifer\\_Lapis@fws.gov](mailto:Jennifer_Lapis@fws.gov)

